



GRADUATE COUNCIL Meeting Notes

Tuesday, November 12, 2019, 9:30 am – 11:00 pm, Maryland Room

In attendance: *Fetter (chair), Sayer (co-chair), Beise, Carpenter, Cohen, Duncan, Enriquez, Fernandez, Green, Jarzynski, Jiang, Kirmani, Klauda, Kleman, Lawley, Liu, Long, McIver, Rappeport, Sachdeva, Shea, Slater, Sprinkle, Tambe, Waguespack, Washington, Zhu*

GS Staff: *Enekwe, Rodgerson, Strausser*

1. Welcome and announcements

The meeting began at 9:31am.

- a. Update on Graduate School searches, associate dean
 - i. A new Graduate School Assistant Dean and Chief of Operations search is underway. Bev Rodgerson (brodgers@umd.edu), Interim Chief of Operations, is chairing the search of the committee.
 - ii. Graduate Academic Counselor (GAC): We are in the final stages of interviewing candidates for this position. This person is to serve as sort of a case manager for students experiencing distress that is impacting their academic progress. The GAC will help students identify appropriate resources to help them. We are hoping to have someone start in beginning the spring 2020 semester. We will provide you the GAC's information once it is available.
 - iii. Ryan Long for Associate Dean for Academic Standards and Policies is taking a sabbatical for the next year. Brooke Fisher Liu (bfliu@umd.edu) has agreed to step in as the new Associate Dean. She will start in January.
- b. Presentation at Board of Trustees meeting, Nov 1
 - i. Dean Fetter presented the importance of doctoral education at the Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting on November 1, 2019. Dean Fetter spoke and a graduate student presented her research. Dean Fetter also showed [Sammy Ramsey's 3 Minute Thesis](#) to the BOT. If you have not seen his video, please take a moment to view it. It is an excellent example of a successful 3-minute thesis. Please encourage your students to do a 3MT. More information about 3MT can be found here (<https://gradschool.umd.edu/funding/student-fellowships-awards/umd-three-minute-thesis-competition>)
- c. Health insurance update (see attached)
 - i. At the last meeting the GC voted unanimously to implement a health insurance requirement for all graduate students. The Provost and all Dean's have agreed to this requirement. Dean Fetter and GS staff met with the health center and



others to better determine the implementation. The goal is for this to take effect in fall 2020. More information will be forthcoming.

- d. Major events:
- e. Candidacy Reception: Nov 20 / May 4, 4-5:30 pm, University House; please RSVP!
- f. Celebration of Doctoral Graduates: Dec 11 / and spring 2020 (more details to come)
- g. Ph.D. Pathways Conference, May 1, Stamp (see attached)
 - i. This is focused on nonacademic careers for doctoral students. This is an all day event. There is a career expo following the conference so our doctoral students can understand the interview process and what jobs are available to them.
- h. Fellowship and Award Celebration: May 13, 3-5 pm, Grand Ballroom Lounge, Stamp
GradTerp Exchange: Nov 12 / Dec 3, 5-7 pm, MilkBoy
 - i. Tonight! Please join us. We will be doing GTE in the spring. Stay tuned for more dates.

Approval of minutes of 9/10/19 meeting

- i. Meeting minutes were approved unanimously with no changes.

ACTION ITEMS

- 2. Grading policy for thesis and dissertation research credits (see attached)
 - a. There were conflicting policies in the graduate catalog. Based on the GC's recommendation and comments at the previous GC meeting, we are proposing the policy that was distributed with the meeting materials.
 - b. Some policy details: if doctoral students enrolled 899 are making satisfactory process, then they are given a grade of "S". If the student is not completing the work required for 899 in a satisfactory manner, then they are not making satisfactory progress with their degree and should receive an F. This F should trigger a review and prompt a meeting with the faculty and student to address the issue. The grade of "S" and "F" does not calculate in the graduate student's GPA.
 - c. The policy was approved unanimously by the Graduate Council. We hope to have this implemented by the spring semester. More information will be forthcoming.
- 3. Graduate student athletic fee (see attached)
 - a. Dean Fetter is an ex-officio member of the Committee for the Review of Student Fees (CRSF). He wanted to discuss the Athletic Fee with the GC so when he attends CRSF, he can discuss the views of GC with the committee.
 - b. We are the only Big10 Institutions that assess a mandatory graduate student fee for intercollegiate athletics. The main benefit students receive are "free tickets". Dean Fetter outlined the issue in the materials that were distributed ahead of this meeting. GC unanimously supported Dean Fetter's position on the graduate student athletic fee.
 - c. If we get rid of this \$133 fee, then this gives us an opportunity to restructure fees. More to come about this.
 - d. There are also some issues around fees for 12- week terms. More information to come



about this too.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. Holistic tools in graduate admissions (see attached)
 - a. The GS has contracted with Enrollment RX for a new admission system. We would like it to go live on July 1st 2020 for the fall 2021 cycle. This new system will be used by 1000 or more faculty to review applications. The GS thought this was a good time to implement some of the recommendations of the Holistic Review Working Group (HRWG) for the admissions system. These changes allow us to have greater inclusion when reviewing applications.
 - b. We are proposing changes to the Letter of Recommendation and Statement of Purpose. Please review the materials distributed. If you have any comments, please contact Dean Fetter or Anna Qualls (adechek1@umd.edu).
5. Sponsored funding for graduate assistantships (see attached)
 - a. Dean Fetter presented the information that was distributed with the meeting materials.
 - b. The total number of GAs have increased, but the number of research GAs is declining.
 - c. From FY07 to FY19, sponsored research expenditures grew at an average rate of 3.8%/year, but GA expenditures grew at a rate of only 2.3%/year, which did not keep pace with the cost of GA, which increased at a rate of 2.5%/year. The increase in GAs could be due to the increased demand for TAs, particularly in the STEM fields which have seen an increase in undergraduate enrollment for which they need more teaching assistants.
 - d. Note: Research assistantships can be paid from outside funders and are not captured in the data Dean Fetter presented.
 - e. The GS is now looking at all forms of student support on a program basis. We can see when students are getting support, if any. If a student is paid directly from an agency like NASA or NIH, we have no way of knowing that. However, we still find value in knowing how most students are getting supported.
6. GA time-use study (Prof. Liana Sayer)
 - a. Dr. Sayer conducted a study about the time use of graduate students at UMD.
 - b. Information about the study:
 - i. Goals of the study: To advance the understanding of graduate student mental health and daily activity; How graduate student workload and daily time available for restorative activities; and how that might affect their mental health.
 - ii. This study was conducted by Dr. Sayer, Dr. Long Doan and Gordon Rinderknecht – all from the UMD Sociology Department.
 - iii. Study Design: All UMD graduate students with a fall 2018 funding as graduate assistants (RA, TA GA) were invited to participate. Graduate students were asked to fill out a survey and do one weekday and one weekend 24 hour time diary.
 - c. Dr. Sayer covered some of the preliminary results of the study. More information about this study will be provided in the spring semester.
7. Other agenda items for AY19-20



- a. gradSERU- We just received the preliminary results from this study of all graduate students. You can do comparisons with our peer insituations at the program level. More information will be coming soon!
 - b. Training and certification of teaching assistants
 - c. Graduate student mental health
 - d. Faculty mentoring of graduate students
 - e. Graduate student mental health
 - f. Faculty mentoring of graduate studies
8. The meeting adjourned at 11:05am.
9. The next meeting is on February 11 from 2:00-3:30 in the Maryland Room (0100) in Marie Mount Hall.